

THE SATURDAY REVIEW

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SIXPENCE

THE KING AND QUEEN are paying a State visit to Scotland this week, and the ancient glories of Holyroodhouse are being revived in honour of our Scottish Queen. The historic palace which is not perhaps a very attractive place of residence, with memories in some cases more tragic than happy, has been somewhat neglected by recent sovereigns, so that the present visit will be all the more appreciated by those across the border. Their majesties have received an exceptionally warm welcome from their Scottish subjects. The Royal Company of Archers, which in these days have few opportunities of showing their mettle, were in great form, and all the time-honoured customs were strictly observed.

EMPLOYMENT continues to be satisfactory, the increase in insured persons in work being more than half a million more than a year ago. The number of unemployed dropped by nearly 100,000 during the month, there being thus 346,000 fewer unemployed than this time last year. This is satisfactory so far as it goes, and is a direct reflection of improving trade, only partly due to re-armament. But we must never forget that the unemployed still number a million and a third, and that the distressed areas are still distressed.

IN THE SPANISH AFFAIR the full meeting of the Non-Intervention Committee takes place too late for comment this week. General Franco's manifesto is distinctly more conciliatory than some of the recent statements that have come from the insurgent side, though it contains more than one veiled threat. Does General Franco think that with the fall of Bilbao his chances of final success have advanced substantially, or is he genuinely anxious to shorten the fratricidal strife? Only time can tell, and the general position remains obscure.

THE STATEMENT made by General Queipo de Llano that for the sake of peace in Europe General Franco would not oppose the withdrawal of volunteers from Spain is interesting, because some move of the kind was inevitable sooner or later. The Spaniards are a proud race, and the Spanish traditionalists who are fighting for Spain against Red internationalism are bound to rid themselves of indebtedness to foreigners as soon as occasion arises. In the Nationalist territory there is peace and order, and thousands of Spaniards are being drilled and equipped to take their place in the line. As soon as a national army is ready, foreigners will be at a discount, and one hopes that an end of civil war may be in sight.

THE PALESTINE REPORT, so eagerly and anxiously awaited by the Jewish and Arab communities in the land affected by its recommendations, is at last out, and while one may have every sympathy with the Commission over the immense difficulties of their task, one may be excused perhaps, after a hasty perusal of the Commission's proposals, for entertaining a considerable amount of doubt both as to the wisdom of their solution for the grave problem they had to tackle and as to the possibilities of its favourable reception by the leaders and rank and file of the two mutually antagonistic races so deeply concerned with the proposals made. Partition at the best is a counsel of desperation; lines of demarcation drawn on a map may look pleasant and reasonable enough, but in practice it may not be so easy to shepherd the diverse elements in an unruly flock into the separate pens assigned to them. The alternative policy of unification and assimilation has never been given the trial one is convinced it merited on broader grounds of statesmanship. No doubt for its success many years of prudent and tactful handling of the rival communities would have been required. But it would have been worth the labour and trouble expended if only for the sake of the highly important strategic issues involved in the propinquity of Palestine to the Suez Canal and Egypt.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN Protectorates have once more become a bone of contention between the Union Government and Whitehall. That, to say the least, is unfortunate as on the agreement reached in 1935 and fully set out in the *aide memoire* published that year there ought, one might reasonably suppose, to be no possible grounds for dispute or controversy. That agreement specifically laid down that "the policy of the two Governments for the next few years should be directed to bringing about a situation in which, if transfer were to become a matter of practical politics, it could be effected with the full acquiescence of the populations concerned." General Hertzog now complains that so far from Whitehall co-operating in producing the right "atmosphere" it has definitely declined to instruct its officials in the Protectorates to influence the natives under their control. And he openly declares that Whitehall's present attitude is "due to nothing so much as political considerations in connection with the ballot-box." Now, to be quite fair to Whitehall one must also take into account recent Ministerial pronouncements in South Africa on the subject of Native "rights." These statements cannot be regarded as exactly helpful in promoting the cause of the Protectorates' incorporation in the Union. At the same time there does appear to be foundation for the South African

complaint that our Dominions Office, both in this matter of the Protectorates and over the question of the union of the two Rhodesias, has allowed its counsels to be guided too much by idealistic sentiment on behalf of the Native races. In neither case can a policy of obstinate negation be justified, and the sooner the Dominions Office awakes to that fact, the better for the peace, contentment and progress of the Empire's possessions in Africa.

IRISH ELECTIONS have ended in a dead-heat—that is to say Mr. de Valera has exactly half the seats. Either he will have to carry on with the help of Labour, on its own terms, or he will have to arrange for another General Election very shortly. Labour, always a small influence outside Dublin, has steadily increased its position in recent years, but to any one who knows Ireland, a Labour majority is inconceivable. Still Labour may hold the balance of power, thus queering Mr. de Valera's pitch and scotching his ambitions. Those with long memories may recall how a similar position worked at Westminster.

SIR REGINALD POOLE, in the course of a letter to *The Times*, lends the weight of his authority to support two criticisms of Mr. Herbert's Marriage Bill which we have made more than once in these pages. Sir Reginald writes:—

In my view, and speaking from an experience of now some years, I cannot for the life of me understand why the five years provision was ever inserted. I have known of many cases in which adultery has been committed quite soon after marriage, and I am confident that if the experience of other firms were ascertained they would concur in the view which Sir John Withers and I take on this subject.

There is one other matter in the Bill which I would gladly see dropped, and that is the provision which entitles a man or woman to dissolve the marriage on proof of the other spouse's incurable insanity. Medical men can speak with far more authority than I can as to the possibility or impossibility of curing insanity. But, supposing a person is hopelessly insane, I believe it to be the fact that for some considerable portion of the 24 hours day that person can realise existing facts, and that in their lucid intervals a man or woman would recognise that their spouse was married to somebody else. Lunacy is an illness which results from no fault of the person who is afflicted. It seems to me that to penalise unfortunate lunatics by letting them know that their wife or husband is married to another person and their children in his or her custody seems to be little short of cruel.

UNDER the rather curious title of *Kid Galahad*, a new boxing picture makes its appearance at the Gaumont this week; the explanation is that the latest aspirant to championship honours, so the story goes, is also a champion of ladies in distress. There is plenty of punching in this film, and those, like myself, who have seen many heavy-weight fights where one blow has sufficed, will be astonished to see what can be given and taken when the screen writers put the gloves on. The plot itself is of the cross and double-cross variety, with Edward G. Robinson as the challenger's manager, and Humphrey Bogart as the champion's; Bette Davis and Jane Bryan are the two ladies in distress. The dialogue and pace of this film are below the high standards which Hollywood generally achieves in its "tough" pictures. The other new production of note is at the Empire;

this is a screen version of Mr. Williams's successful thriller, *Night Must Fall*. Robert Montgomery is surprisingly cast as the homicidal maniac and, if this kind of thing goes on, I suppose we may expect to see Charles Laughton as a nice young lover in the near future.

IN THE AIR there has been one noteworthy advance this week. The Atlantic has been crossed both ways simultaneously in little more than half a day, and new meaning has been given to the American phrase, "the pond." Everything went strictly according to plan, and the weather forecasts were remarkably accurate. The double event is a definite step forward towards the time, still probably remote, when a fairly regular service can be established. But it would be a mistake to expect too much. On this occasion not only were all the resources of science available, but the conditions were exceptionally favourable. In the air-news this week a dark shadow was cast by the prolonged anxiety about the fate of Mrs. Putnam, now long overdue at the Pacific island of Howland. With all honour to a gallant and "unadvertising" airwoman, some doubt may be expressed about the scientific value of these amateur efforts, and it is clear that if accidents occur, an immense amount of activity is undertaken, generally in vain, by rescue workers by sea and air.

A NEW THRILLER is in progress at Daly's Theatre entitled *No Sleep for the Wicked*. D. L. Ames, the author, makes the mistake of having rather too many characters, the object no doubt being to divert suspicion. In effect, however, it is only rather muddling to a mind already bewildered by a maze of criminality. Apart from this the plot is clever; and there is much witty and diverting dialogue. Peter Haddon makes an excellent hero and Claire Luce is exactly right in the part of the paid vamp. Emilio Cargher plays the part of Kadi with great feeling and the rest of the cast are good if not very exciting players.

There is one mistake in production that is too common a fault to be overlooked. A fight takes place but the hero is not in the least dishevelled. In a recent stage production six men were involved in a fight in which furniture was smashed and glass broken and revolvers were popping away and yet there was not a crooked tie or a black eye among them. The smallest rough and tumble is usually disastrous to the garments and faces of the combatants, and such negligence reduces the dramatic effect to nil and holds up the stage to ridicule.

LAST WEEK we wrote that the *National Review* was about to swallow the *English Review* next month. This was not a happy phrase, and we learn from the July *English* which we have since seen that the development is a matter of amalgamation rather than absorption. Both papers take the same sound Imperial line in politics, and we feel confident that the subscribers to both will suck no small advantage from the forthcoming development.

Leading Articles

URBS IN RURE

THERE must be many people of intelligence who, motoring through this England of ours, seek to console themselves for the wreckage wrought for the sake of money by the thought that this state of things cannot endure. "As for man, his days are as grass, as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." The days of even the speculative builder are as grass: indeed the grass and the flower of the field will outlive him. For nature abides for ever and makes sport of the work of man. The time will come when bungalows will fall in ruin and no man will rebuild them. Weeds and trees will break through the concrete of arterial roads and the forest will reclaim its own. As an excessive population diminishes, all the wild things that are fighting mankind will close in on his buildings and enclosures and these islands will be a more lovely place for those who are still alive. It may well be that the overweening pride of Western Europe and its worship of ugliness may be brought low by a pestilence rather than the war which is the present bugbear of our civilisation. A great plague is an ever-present peril against which modern medical science would be powerless, as was proved by the post-war influenza that slew more millions than all our scientific engines of destruction. There comes a point when the gods grow weary of the futility of man, whether he loses his reason in the quest of power or wealth or goes mad for the sake of speed, and all things return to a state in which his power of interference is diminished.

It is interesting to note how the supremacy of human science has reversed our feelings towards nature. There was a time when the clearing in the forest, the huts in the wilderness, the earth-works on the downs shouted defiance to the powers that were not man, and seemed to the human mind inexpressibly beautiful. There is something terrible and repulsive in the primeval forest. The rotting trees under foot, the airstifling tangle of vegetation, the half darkness and the menace of nameless earth spirits strike a chill and a shudder to the bravest heart. Equally repulsive and far more terrible because it is the outward and visible sign of an inward curse, a concrete manifestation of human corruption, is the leprous hideousness of the mean buildings that like a putrid ulcer is eating up the beauty of that England which our ancestors contrived by their ingenious treatment of nature as a friend and not an enemy. All the outskirts of London cry to high heaven for vengeance on those who replaced grass and trees with the most sordid brick and mortar that the world has ever seen. The invader, if the day comes for him to overwhelm our suburbs with bombs, will at least be able to plead that he is destroying ugliness.

At present it is useless to hope that any effort will be made to check the curse of speed. At certain schools children are taught to dodge motor-

cars, but no one asks them to consider what exactly is done with the time that is saved by travelling fast. If civilisation is to recover reason, roads must be narrowed instead of widened. Footpaths must be restored to discourage motor drivers from racing round corners to the risk of human life in order that they may spend a few more minutes or hours of boredom at their destination. Obstacles, duly announced, should be set at given points. Three good deep drains across a road at a dangerous point, sufficient to break the springs of a car travelling more than fifteen miles an hour, would do more to reduce road casualties than much legislation and many fines. The lives of a number of citizens would be lengthened and presumably the world would be the happier.

It may of course be argued that the reckless motorist is doing his bit in keeping down the surplus population. Unfortunately, anything he accomplishes in this respect is defeated by the abominations that he himself brings into the country with his litter and arterial roads. To him we owe the desolation of ribbon development which still goes on apace. Advertisements are to be seen regularly of building plots recommended on account of their frontage on a modern motor road. It is hopeless to expect local authorities to check this damnable system of ruining our birthright. They dare not face the problem of compensation and the vested interests which control them nullify their powers. If any of our politicians really wants to put an end to ribbon development, the remedy is easy. Let anyone who builds on these modern arteries pay for the road in proportion to his frontage, so that he will save money by making for himself a side road opening the back area. As soon as ribbon development is unprofitable it will cease to exist.

A great wail is being raised that our population is decreasing and that before long there will be hardly anyone left to inhabit our islands. This prospect would be more alarming if the inhabitants both of town and country were not swarming to such an extent that elbow room is becoming rare and the problem of unemployment can only be faced by the wisecracks who govern us, when we are arming desperately to save our lives. In the introduction to "The Napoleon of Notting Hill," G. K. Chesterton commented on the wisdom of those who after studying the growth of mushrooms and acorns were horrified to calculate how soon the fungus would overshadow the tallest trees of the forest. At the end of the 18th century Malthus warned the world of the dangers of over-population, the tendency of life to increase beyond the means of subsistence, and to a certain extent his prophecy has been fulfilled. Now, however, his worst fears are falsified, since we are threatened no longer with too many, but too few.

It seems hard to argue that the world would not be a better and more satisfactory place, if the population of this country was reduced to a figure which could be supported by its own produce. There is no particular virtue in carrying food across the world, if it can be provided at home. The modern method by which fish is unobtainable at

the seaside and farm produce in the country, unless it has travelled to London and back, is a *reductio ad absurdum* of that complicated organisation of which we profess to be so proud.

THE VOICE OF REASON

FROM time to time someone who speaks with authority and distinction drops the niceties of official jargon, rids himself of the trammels of official caution and speaks frankly and sincerely what is in his mind and, therefore, in the mind of millions of sane and intelligent persons.

The last brave man to speak after this fashion has been the American Ambassador, who, as honorary chairman of the American Society in London, addressed a gathering of three hundred at an Independence Day dinner at the Dorchester Hotel on Monday night. He surveyed "a situation in the world that is dangerous and menacing," and he marked a contrast between prosperous and contented nations and those that are discontented and insolvent.

"The ones," he said, "that are prosperous and happy are the democracies and the ones that are unhappy and insolvent are those under dictatorships. I admit that a very strong argument can be made that dictatorship is a better method of preparing for war, but democracy with its traditions is better to finish war." After pointing out patent and obvious facts that Britain and America detested war and had done everything possible by precept and example to lead the world towards peace, he commented on the equally obvious fact that Britain and the United States are now spending vast sums on armaments. "America," he said, "would rather have spent every penny of that money on schools and hospitals. The British adopted a great policy of re-armament not because they wished to, but because they were driven to it. In my judgment, the policies of re-armament of Great Britain and the United States are to-day having a greater weight towards peace than anything else could have." He did not mince words in pointing out how futile it was for others to hope to match the British Commonwealth and the United States of America in any armaments race, although he founded his hope of the future on the reasoning power and the sanity of the very despotisms which at present shock and disturb the world. "If we must deal with people who cannot and will not listen to reason, if we must deal with despotism and people who regard war as a cult and who only listen to the argument of force, then we must fall back on that."

This speech, remarkable in the candour and sincerity of its expression, is well worth most serious attention in all parts of the world. For Mr. Bingham had the courage not only to tell what are known as the totalitarian States quite precisely which is which and what is what, but the courage also to put into plain words those ideals of the permanence of Anglo-American friendship and of a continuous identity of thought and action in the graver problems of civilisation, from which the more timid are apt to shrink lest some silly section of public opinion, either in the British Empire or

in that Middle West of America which is the bugbear of politicians, should take both fright and umbrage.

These things needed saying. There are many who believe that the hope of preserving civilisation, of keeping democracy alive, of bringing back to a crazy world the realisation of ordered liberty and the pursuit of the Christian ideal, rests and can only rest in what amounts, in fact if not in form, to an Anglo-American alliance.

WIMBLEDON

ANOTHER Wimbledon has come and gone, the men's matches going to the Americans and the women's doubles to an Anglo-French alliance, while the women's singles were won for Great Britain by Miss D. E. Round, in three gruelling sets played on one of the hottest days of the year.

That she gave the onlookers a nasty fright by being 2-4 in the third set only added to the glory of her victory. The men's doubles, won by Budge and Mako, threatened during the first set to be a walk-over. Although Hughes and Tuckey woke up in the third set and gave as good as they got, they were unable to keep it up and so lost the championship. Budge, who set up a new record by winning all three events in which men compete, is a fascinating player to watch. His flaming head and long limbs flash across the court like lightning and his imperturbable manners and complete sang-froid make him the magnet of any set.

There are other players taller and stronger than he, but few with such complete calm and outward indifference to mistakes and lost opportunities. It is this temperament that plays such an important part in matches. Bromwich, a player with some magnificent strokes at his command, is one who is easily discouraged by a few bad shots and shows his distress in too marked a manner. Mrs. King and Miss Pitman, who rather surprisingly reached the finals, attained this position chiefly by their complete coolness, good partnership and steady play, no part of the court ever being unguarded, whereas last year's champions, Miss James and Miss Stammers, as pretty a pair of players as one could wish to see, constantly left half the court vacant, a fault which contributed largely to their defeat. Mrs. King and Miss Pitman were beaten in the finals by Mme. Mathieu and Miss Yorke in a slow and rather uninteresting match.

The men's singles were the most interesting and spectacular to watch. No one who witnessed the defeat of Austin is likely to forget the third set, when the game stood at 12-all. Austin was defeated more by lack of stamina than by style of play, but as his opponent lost to Budge it is not likely that he would have won the championship even if he had survived the semi-finals.

The weather throughout was fine, though a strong wind on one or two days and rather too fierce a heat on others added to the fatigue of playing, but the sensible clothing now worn almost without exception reduces discomfort to the minimum. It is amusing to look back to the no-stockings controversy of only a few years ago and to wonder what more changes are to come. Are

shorts likely to become universal for men? Menzel, who plays in trousers and with his shirt buttoned at the wrists, makes a strange contrast to Parker in the most attenuated of shorts and singlet. Two-handed players now no longer cause astonished amusement, except when Budge in a knock-up uses this style of play as a jest. In this changing world can "lawn-tennis" change much more?

SCOTLAND YARD

THERE are peoples of other nations who are filled with an awe-inspired curiosity at the thought or sight of police headquarters. They speculate fearfully as to what goes on inside, as if the building were populated with a race of people quite distinct ethically, emotionally and socially from themselves.

Law-abiding Englishmen do not react in this way, however curious they are, at the sight of Scotland Yard. Perhaps the reason is that they know that the policeman of whatever rank shares with them that characteristic common sense which is the heritage of our philosopher Locke. The police, we feel, conduct even their most subtle investigations in much the same manner that we should ourselves.

The significant but little known case of the trouser buttons is an instance in point. Scotland Yard was called upon to investigate a fire which had taken place in a clothier's warehouse. The owners declared that three thousand pairs of workmen's trousers had been destroyed, and they claimed compensation from a suspicious insurance company on the basis of this number. The detective inspector in charge of the cases, acting on instructions from headquarters, made a minute examination of the debris. He searched for one clue only—trouser buttons; and his search was rewarded by the discovery of only five hundred! No further or more elaborate investigation was necessary. Imagination, controlled by common sense, fastened upon an essential element in the inquiry and took steps to establish it.

Scotland Yard have been accused of lack of imagination, and of failure to deal adequately with the more unusual kinds of crime. Whilst it may be true that some of its investigations lack the brilliance in deduction said to be associated with the detective work of other countries, Scotland Yard is second to none in the patient accumulation of relevant facts, and the careful building up of the case step by step. The whole story of the mystery of the murder of Vera Page in 1931 has never been told. But the fact that the mystery was never legally solved in no way detracts from the thoroughness and attention to detail with which the inquiry was conducted. In the first place more than five hundred statements were taken and carefully analysed. This in itself brought to light evidence of great importance.

It is also said that Scotland Yard does not make full use of scientific methods. That is not true of this case. The dust in the child's clothing was examined and found to consist mainly of coal dust. Spots of candle grease on her clothing were analysed and proved not to correspond with any

candle found in her parent's house, but more closely with a candle found elsewhere. A bandage found in the crook of the child's arm was examined, and traces of ammonia were detected in it. From the scientific evidence the case was reconstructed as follows. The child had been attacked by a person wearing a finger bandage to protect a suppurating wound (traces of pus were also discovered on the bandage). She had been in a coal cellar or in some place where coal was kept. The murderer had required a candle, so that he had attacked the girl or concealed her body for a time in a dark place.

There is good reason to believe, on information which obviously cannot be disclosed in the circumstances, that this reconstruction was correct in all essentials. There was not sufficient evidence to clear up the mystery entirely, but all the available material was utilised, and the maximum amount of information it could give was extracted from it.

The photographic department of Scotland Yard is probably the best in the world. The fingerprint photographs are particularly fine examples of the photographer's art. It was photographic skill which sent the murderer, Podmore, to the gallows. The police were faced with a particularly difficult technical problem. There were some scraps of carbon paper found on the scene of the crime which carried indentations made by the pencil. Some of these impressions looked like the outline of initials. After many trials and failures, photographs were obtained which showed what these initials were. They consisted of the letters "F.W.T." These were the initials of a pseudonym used by Podmore and were further shown to be in his handwriting.

This case is a classic instance of the triumphs of the evidence of the camera. A large number of experiments were carried out with different kinds of illumination, and with varying positions of the source of the light. A sharply oblique beam of light, arranged in such a way that the indentations were in shadow and thus stood out with maximum clearness, was at last found to give the best results. There was no question as to the identity of the initials in the final result. This evidence was so vital that its admission was hotly contested by the defence. But it could not be excluded. That scrap of carbon paper and the lettering upon it was the chief clue which brought Henry Podmore to justice.

These three cases admirably illustrate the combination of common sense, judicious use of scientific methods and technical efficiency which are characteristic of the detective work which goes on inside Scotland Yard. It is perhaps true that it has not developed and applied the theoretical methodology of criminal investigation to the extent it has been developed elsewhere. The police in this country tend to regard the detection of crime as an art rather than a science. But it is in any case an inevitable result of the common-sense point of view of our nation. That is why the average Englishman does not tremble at the name of the Criminal Investigation Department. There is no mystery about the method, however ignorant the layman may be about the details.

Books of The Day

A MECCAN PILGRIMAGE

THE European has before now managed to visit Mecca in the guise of a devout worshipper of Mahomet. Mr. David Chale also made this visit, but in his case there was no need of pretence so far as his religion was concerned. He had embraced Islam out of conviction and because it gave him the peace of mind he so badly needed. His is a somewhat extraordinary story, and Mr. Owen Rutter tells it for him with an entertaining liveliness in "Triumphant Pilgrimage" (Harrap, illustrated, 10s. 6d.). Chale, one gathers, has always been a somewhat restless character. In his early youth he entered the Navy, but found the discipline unbearably irksome. His next venture in careers was in a shipping office in the City. Here, too, he resented authority and quickly put an end to his employment by suddenly and without a word of explanation flinging a cup of tea "splosh" into the manager's face. After this exploit he deserted the City for Sarawak, where for a time he obtained the job of district officer in the white Rajah's service. His work brought him into close contact with the Malays, for whom he speedily conceived a warm admiration and affection. Their dignity and poise towards life and their simple religious faith appealed to him and helped to turn his thoughts to Islam. With the zeal of the convert he desired to be an instrument for saving them from the influences tending to undermine both their character and their religion.

Chale resigned from the Sarawak service and returned to London in order to make sufficient money in the City to finance his intended trip to Mecca, the *Haj* pilgrimage being, in his view, essential for the rôle he aspired to of missionary for the promotion of the unity of Islam and for the salvation of the Sarawak Malays. While working for five years on the Stock Exchange he utilised what leisure he could spare from his primary object of accumulating capital in making a thorough study of Arabic and the Koran. Then, when he had amassed what he considered were sufficient funds for his purpose, he went back to Sarawak, made his public declaration of conversion to Islam, and, on the advice of his Mahomedan friends, took to himself as wife a young and attractive Malay girl, who was also anxious to perform the *Haj*. Leaving Sarawak, Chale and his wife first journeyed to Europe; the ease with which this Malay girl adapted herself to the ways, luxuries and delights of civilisation and the charm she exercised on all who met her being naturally very gratifying to her husband. When it came to visiting the Hedjaz, Chale discovered that the presence of his Mahomedan wife facilitated the granting to him of a visa for Jeddah. But at this point an unexpected difficulty arose. Ibn Saud had decreed that no Moslem convert of less than six years' standing could be allowed to proceed on the pilgrimage to Mecca. Chale, having no such credentials, had to fight hard to obtain the lifting of the ban against him, but at the eleventh hour his

persistence prevailed, and the *Haj* in all its details was duly accomplished. It is a very interesting tale, as Mr. Rutter tells it, even if he is a little vague about his hero's missionary ambitions.

NEARLY A KING

Mr. James Strachey Barnes, in his book entitled "Half a Life Left" (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 10s. 6d.), tells us of a time when he became "a popular and almost national figure" in Albania and incidentally a hot favourite for the throne. This was before the claims to that position of the present King Zog had been recognised. Mr. Barnes' popularity was due to the fact that he was understood to have been largely responsible for saving Albania from partition at the end of the war through his work behind the scenes at the Peace Conference. He was accordingly invited to visit Albania and help put her finances in order. Having accepted the invitation, he became a natural subject of interest to the would-be King-makers. The story of his Albanian adventures is amusingly described and makes most entertaining reading. Another interesting and valuable section of his book deals with his experiences as Reuter's correspondent on the Southern front in the Italo-Abyssinian war. But readers who are not Fascists may find the first and last parts of Mr. Barnes' book—with its eulogies of Mussolini and unflattering comparisons of British Democracy with Italian Fascism—a little irritating and wearisome. Perhaps they may be even tempted to hope that, with half a life still left to Mr. Barnes, his excessive ardour for Fascism has still time to cool.

FRENCH STUDY OF HENRY VIII

When a Frenchman, M. Paul Rival, offers us a study of Henry VIII, it is inevitable that the sex *motif* should be the predominant, ever-recurring note. In "The Six Wives of Henry VIII" (translated by Una Lady Troubridge, Heinemann, 12s. 6d.), M. Rival is not content with setting forth that monarch's relations with his half-a-dozen spouses; he explores with satirical zest the whole subject of Henry's known and possible adventures as an enthusiastic disciple of Venus—more particularly the liaisons with Bessie Blount and with the mother and sister of Anne Boleyn. The portrait he presents to us of a monarch with an uncontrollable sexual urge, and with a meagre endowment both of courage and statecraft, one, too, who was a constant prey to his religious inhibitions and to insane jealousy of the more magnificent Francis I of France, hardly fits in with all the historical facts that have come down to us about the second Tudor sovereign.

With all his faults—and they were certainly many—Henry VIII must have been a ruler of much greater capacity and courage than M. Rival is inclined to credit him with having. However, with this reservation one can recommend with confidence M. Rival's book in Lady Troubridge's excellent English translation. If it may not be entirely historically accurate, it is history made extremely readable. The great and tragic personages of a distant age become through his creative imagination very human to us, with all

their qualities, good and bad, as beings of real flesh and blood. And on every page the mind delights in the dexterous play of the author's satirical wit and in the light, deft touches that serve to furnish a portrait or describe a scene. Take, for example, the account of Catherine of Aragon's arrival in England to marry Prince Arthur:—

"Catherine (in the country beyond Plymouth where she had landed) missed the blue sky; she felt further from Paradise and these English seemed to be devoid of all cravings, either for heaven or women; they lived a life bereft alike of grave sins and of fierce passions. They devoured meat that dripped blood, drank cider, and about them lingered the smell of their orchards. Catherine, shivering with malaria under her drenched mantles, was nauseated by their placidity."

Then she encountered Henry VII and Prince Arthur. "She examined them closely from head to foot. They in no way resembled their athletic subjects. They were pale and weedy and appeared to be soaked in fog. The father, at forty-five, was bent like an old man: it was amazing that this long, hollow stalk had been capable of making war, had worn harness and conquered a kingdom. His face was narrow and bony and his mouth like a gash. His eyes blinked, his nose was pendulous, melancholy and flabby. The son, even thinner than his parent, had anxious eyes, stiff curls and an uncertain, childish mouth. He eyed Catherine shyly and murmured a few sentences which his tutor translated into Latin. The Spaniards found it hard to understand Latin spoken with the Oxford accent. . . ."

ENGLISH FRUIT

In spite of all temptations, which are numerous, to buy the fruit of other nations, to say nothing of the Empire, we English are firm in our belief that English-grown fruit is the best in the world. Of course, it is apt to be more expensive, unless one has the self-restraint to wait until fruit is at its best, when by one of the mysteries of commerce it is also cheapest. In recent years there has been an enormous increase in the consumption of fresh fruit, to the great advantage of the national health. Gone are the days when fruit was looked upon as a luxury of the well-to-do, to be eaten mainly at dessert. Good fruit is still expensive, but infinitely cheaper and easier to come by than in the youth of those of us who are no longer young. All the year round we can buy, for instance, oranges and lemons at reasonable prices. How different from the days when the bells of St. Clements announced the arrival of orange-boats and lemons from Italy and Spain! We cannot grow them here except in hot-houses. But for indigenous fruits the best and cheapest way is to grow your own, and even Londoners can do this as the girth of Greater London and the improvement in traffic increase.

Here is an admirable book which tells you how to set about the job ("Our Heritage of Fruits," by Hilda M. Coley, Lutterworth Press, 7s. 6d.). We are given a practical description, not too technical, of all the obvious fruits from the apple to the medlar and the mulberry; but the glory of the book

is the thirty-two plates of coloured illustrations, showing the plants and trees in their various stages. The book also includes, by a generous extension of the title, such semi-fruits as tomatoes, cucumbers and marrows. For these illustrations Miss Coley was awarded the Grenfell Medal of the Royal Horticultural Society, and one cannot imagine a more worthy recipient.

There is one curious omission. We are told nothing about the quince. Although, like many other fruits to which space is given, the quince is a fairly recent comer, as centuries go, to these islands, but it is typically English by now. What apple-tart is perfect without a flavouring of quince, and for a change what can be more attractive than quince jelly, and that rare delicacy, quince cheese? It is true that the quince is more beautiful in flowering time than when it offers the ripe fruit in late autumn. It is later than the plum, apple or pear to ripen, but all the more welcome at last. In the next edition, and there should be many, we hope that Miss Coley will tell us something about the quince.

NEW NOVELS

It is not by any means an original idea to provide unity for a number of life-stories packed into one novel by fortuitously bringing all the characters together in one place. Many writers have adopted this device, not always with conspicuous success. The difficulty, of course, is the dove-tailing process; too sudden breaks in the narrative are apt to become rather irritating to the reader, who

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LONDON: JOHN MURRAY

is naturally enough disinclined to switch his interest from one character to another. Mr. Cecil Roberts, however, is too skilled a craftsman to run any risks of this sort. In his "Victoria Four-Thirty" (Hodder & Stoughton) he does his business of assembling his diverse company of travellers for the Continental boat-train in such a subtle, fascinating manner that the reader is quite willing to deceive himself into believing that he has before him one highly entertaining story, instead of a collection of more or less unconnected tales, and is eager to know what happens to each and all of Mr. Roberts' characters. And having thus hypnotised his reader, Mr. Roberts keeps him well under his spell to the very end. It is a real triumph of the novelist's art. And what a pleasing gallery of portraits he presents!

Mr. Eliot Crawshay-Williams gives his novel, "They Want to be Faithful" (John Long), the sub-title "A Moral Tale." The ending is moral enough, since the philandering husband hero is apparently won over to "faithfulness" at the finish. But for the rest, one would be inclined to describe the story as more "racy" than moral. Certainly there is little morality in the hero's behaviour or philosophy throughout the greater part of the book. But the story—once the author gets it going, and he is perhaps a little slow in starting—is anything but dull. In short, a light but amusing book.

"A Modern Tom Brown's Schooldays," by Michael Scott (Harrap), has been written with the purpose of showing that our public schools "contribute to the maturing of the best in British manhood, British character and British intellect"—a laudable object surely in an age in which there is a sort of "inferiority complex" urge on the part of the uninitiated to discredit such schools. If Mr. Scott's book can hardly be said to rival in excellence the old classic to which it is a sequel (with other of the old familiar names besides "Tom Brown" re-appearing in the narrative), it has at least the merit of giving us a thoroughly authentic picture of modern public school life—"the atmosphere and the happenings" of the Rugby the author himself has known.

The late J. S. Fletcher belonged to the old school of crime story writers, but he had a large public who remained faithful to him because it knew it could always depend on him for a straightforward, exciting tale which eschewed anything in the shape of gross improbability. When Mr. Fletcher died he left one of his stories unfinished, and this has now been completed by the expert aid of Torquemada. It is called "Todmanhawe Grange" (Thornton Butterworth) and, apart from the mystery involved in it, there is the obvious entertainment for the reader of trying to puzzle out where Fletcher ends and Torquemada begins. Incidentally, it is quite a good and enjoyable story, as one would expect from its dual authorship.

Of the creating of new types of amateur sleuths and criminologists there is not likely to be any end till the taste for crime fiction disappears—and that, one may hope for the sake of those who purvey to that taste, will not happen for many years to come.

Mr. Anthony Webb in his "Verdict Without Jury" (Harrap) has selected as his sleuth an elderly gentleman, of amiable but slightly trying disposition, who has two passions—one for "gadgets," the other, hitherto unfulfilled in practice, for criminology. Suddenly pitchforked into a murder mystery, he naturally revels in the opportunity afforded him of displaying his talents in investigation. And, of course, in the end he duly solves the mystery, without, however, informing the Police regarding the identity of the murderer. His reasons for withholding his solution from the guardians of the law may not appear to all readers particularly valid, but that need not detract from their interest in the story of his exploits.

OTHER NEW BOOKS

"Defoe," by James Sutherland (with 8 colotype plates and two text illustrations, Methuen, 12s. 6d.); "The Lost One" (A biography of Mary (Perdita) Robinson), by Marguerite Steen (Methuen, illustrated, 12s. 6d.); "Modern War: Armies not Air Forces Decide Wars," by Lt.-Colonel B. C. Denning (North Hants Printing Co., Fleet, Hants, 8s. 6d.).

PUBLISHERS' PLANS

Among the notable books promised for the early autumn will be the first instalment of an autobiography written by the well-known French painter, M. Jacques Emile Blanche. The English translation will be published by Messrs. Dent under the title, "Portraits of a Lifetime." The book will be illustrated by reproductions of the author's portraits and other paintings.

Another autumn publication will be a book by Monsignor J. O'Connor (the original of Chesterton's "Father Brown") entitled "Father Brown on Chesterton." The publisher will be Mr. Frederick Muller.

The Oxford University Press announce for September "Unemployment in the Learned Professions," by Dr. Walter M. Kotschnig, formerly General Secretary of the International Student Service in Geneva. This book, based on data supplied by some thirty countries, discloses the unfortunate conditions resulting from lack of planning in education in Europe and the United States.

Some time either in the late summer or early autumn Messrs. Constable will publish a selection of Van Gogh's letters, so arranged and edited that they tell the artist's story in his own words. The book will be called "Dear Theo: An Autobiography of Van Gogh from his Letters." The editor is Mr. Irving Stone.

Cassells announce for publication on July 15 "Vain Glory," a miscellany of the Great War "by those who fought in it on all fronts and on both sides." It is a book for all the nations who took part in the war. It runs to 784 pages and contains little but the words of actors in and witnesses of the struggle—a series of aspects of the War, scenes, incidents, declarations, actualities. The price will be 8s. 6d.

Round the Empire

AUSTRALIAN LAW REFORM

THE Australian Press recently has been stressing the urgent need of law reform owing to the law's complexity and delays and the inability of overworked Judges to overtake the ever-growing arrears. This is particularly the case in New South Wales, and the *Sydney Bulletin*, in discussing the subject, points out that part of the trouble complained of is due to a system that permits seven Parliaments to make laws at the rate of 500 to 100 per Parliament per session. The position, it says, is worst in New South Wales because New South Wales goes in for more laws and more litigation than other States, and it is not relieved to any extent by the dubious expedient of temporary appointments to the Bench. Moreover, in New South Wales, "the law has developed an unfortunate tendency to become long-winded. Criminal cases last for such a time that juries, it is suspected, acquit because they are tired out or are anxious to get back to their own businesses. Civil cases drag on to such an extent that, rather than go through further expensive ordeals—perhaps appeal to the Full Court, appeal to the High Court, appeal to the Privy Council—parties retire hurt and settle out of court. New South Wales' special law-reform needs, in the special circumstances that will exist until Australia sweeps away its surplus Parliament, are abolition of the archaic division of the legal profession into two branches—there is only one in other States—simplification of pleadings, appointment of at least one more Supreme Court Justice and adoption of safeguards (security for costs is one) against speculative and black-mailing actions, tedious repetition on the part of policemen and roaring cataracts of forensic eloquence, carried to the point where there may be a denial of justice."

COMMONWEALTH'S LONDON FUNDS

One of the most vital parts of the Australian financial structure is the reserve of funds which is held in London by the Commonwealth Bank, and the trading banks, and from which interest commitments could be met and trade obligations paid in the event of a sudden adverse movement in the trade balance. The reserve is affected each year according to whether the balance of payments is a credit or a debit. The extent of the reserve has not been disclosed for two years, but it has been learned that since 1934, when it amounted to £48,560,000, there has been a substantial decrease. At June 30, 1935, it had fallen to £37,020,000, and on June 30, 1936, it amounted to £33,177,000. This year, says the *Australasian*, "there is sure to be an upward movement in the reserve because of an excess of credits over debits in the balance of payments. In addition to the credit of £33,000,000 expected from overseas trading for the year, it is believed that capital movements into Australia for investment purposes will aggregate more than £6,000,000, making a total credit of nearly

£40,000,000. Debits, consisting of interest payments, expenditure by Australian tourists overseas, etc., will amount to about £30,000,000, leaving £10,000,000 to be added to the London reserve, and making a total of £43,000,000. The Commonwealth Bank's note issue department holds liquid reserves of nearly £16,000,000 in London, and this sum, though strictly not part of the ordinary reserve, could be used in an emergency. Thus, at the end of this financial year the Commonwealth will be in the strong position of having on short call in London reserves totalling nearly £60,000,000, or sufficient to meet debits, apart from merchandise imports, for two years."

NEW ZEALAND'S PROSPERITY

New Zealand's Prime Minister (Mr. M. J. Savage) before leaving England for New Zealand expressed, in a statement to the Press, his immense satisfaction over the figures disclosed in the latest official return for the banking, trade and industrial conditions generally of the Dominion. "This return," he said "shows how rapidly New Zealand is regaining prosperity. One particularly interesting fact is that the banking returns of the last quarter of the financial year showed that non-interest-bearing deposits in the banks of the Dominion exhibit an increase of £5,293,472, and the interest-bearing deposits a decrease of £4,603,916, compared with the corresponding period in 1936. This is an indication of the increasing confidence of trade and industry,

SCIENCE

has armed the surgeon with powerful weapons, and the patient in a modern hospital, though he may be unable to pay a penny for treatment, has at his service much the same resources as he would have if he were a millionaire.

YET HOW COSTLY

these are, few but the governors of a great hospital realise. Cardiff Royal Infirmary, founded just a century ago, is faced with the necessity of providing Deep X-Ray Therapy Apparatus, of making extensions to its Pathology Department, of modernising the Operating Theatres, and of carrying out many other vital, urgent reforms. It is faced with a budget that cannot be less, and may be much more, than a quarter of a million pounds sterling.

REMEMBERING

that it costs £75,000 a year to meet the ordinary expenses of the Infirmary; remembering, too, that the number of patients admitted has doubled within the last ten years; and bearing in mind the economic status of the area whence most of these patients come—here assuredly is a cause that commands sympathy and help throughout the United Kingdom.

Will you send a contribution now to the Honorary Treasurer, Sir William James Thomas, Bart., CENTENARY APPEAL, Cardiff Royal Infirmary, Cardiff.

and a readiness to convert liquid funds into capital and consumable goods. We are now back in our banking figures to the year 1928, when the percentages of non-interest-bearing deposits to interest-bearing were 49 per cent. and 51 per cent. respectively. The figures for the last quarter of the financial year just ended were precisely the same. In 1933 the relative figures were 33 per cent. non-interest-bearing and 67 per cent. interest-bearing. A year ago the relative figures were 41 per cent. non-interest-bearing and 59 per cent. interest-bearing. Government deposits are excluded from the returns. I should also state that the deposits not bearing interest are over £8,000,000 higher than in the boom year of 1928, showing the greater abundance of money now available."

Turning to trade and industry, Mr. Savage remarked that for the latest financial year the exports of merchandise (exclusive of specie) amounted to £60,234,000, an increase of £10,558,000 over the previous twelve months; while the imports reached £47,624,000, or £10,182,000 more than for the same period of 1936. Throughout the Dominion local trading conditions showed a very marked improvement, extending over almost all classes of business. In respect to Auckland city, the report stated: "It is evident that industry and traders generally are receiving increasing returns and that, while these increases are set-off to some extent by increased costs, a balance is still maintained. In no instance have inquiries brought adverse reports of the conditions ruling in industry. This quarter brings to a close a complete fiscal year under the new régime, a year in which many changes have been brought to industry and the people generally, and a year that should furnish a strong indication of the effects of new policies. In this latter regard the final accounts of the industrial concerns should serve as a reliable criterion of the economic circumstances attending them. Some prominent companies whose trading conditions have been subject to the recent industrial legislation have all shown increases in the amounts of their net profits as compared with last year." These observations, Mr. Savage holds, "may be accepted as generally applicable to the whole Dominion."

CANADA'S BANNER YEAR

Canadian business is making steady gains. A review of the first quarter of the current year gives every ground for belief that the remarkable recoveries recorded in 1936 will be bettered in 1937. Advances were recorded in all but eight of the fifty-three factors which are regarded by the commentators as significant of Canadian industry as a whole. The physical volume of business showed a gain of 11 per cent. over the same period last year, representing a general betterment in mineral production, manufacturing, construction, electric power and distribution; copper, nickel and gold production showed good advances; the output of newsprint set a new high record; exports of planks and boards gained 38 per cent.; the primary iron and steel industry was much more active; the output of motor cars, at 64,000, recorded a gain of

43.5 per cent., and contemplated construction work was double last year's figure.

Imports from British countries in the month of March were valued at £3,800,000, showing an increase of 32.7 per cent. From other countries imports had a value of £10,400,000, an advance of 35.5 per cent. For April, exports from Canada to British countries were £5,340,000, and to all other countries £7,760,000, the increases being 33 and 3 per cent. respectively. Most of the statistics that indicate the state of business move steadily into higher levels. In April the number of cigarettes released for consumption in Canada was 550½ million—being greater than in any other month in history. If cigarette smoking is an indication of prosperity, then this particular puff of smoke shows which way the wind is blowing!

PEDIGREES IN FISH

Do pedigrees matter in fish? Is a sound genealogical tree of as much moment in the piscatorial world as in the case of our landed gentry? Canadian experts in the Dominion Department of Fisheries have long believed that it is, and they have been putting their theory to the test. One hundred trout fry, carefully selected from special hatcheries, and 100 smaller fry—as it were—from parents of no particular standing, were placed in two separate rearing tanks and fed on the same kind of food. Nine months later the two groups were weighed separately. The pedigree trout turned the scale at 204 ozs., while the common herd next door couldn't push the scale indicator past 92 ozs. In other words, the fry from selected parents had gained more than twice as rapidly as their cousins. What is more, some months after the experiment began fifty of the thoroughbreds weighed 162 ozs., or roughly 3½ ozs. each, a phenomenal figure, which left the mongrels completely in the shade. There are obvious dangers in applying the moral to mankind. The ability to acquire a robust corporation does not necessarily indicate blue blood.

INCUBATED WILD DUCK

Canada has shown consistent ingenuity in preserving her natural assets and her game, and it was hardly likely that she would view with equanimity the threat to her wild duck, which for many years have provided sportsmen with first-class shooting. To prevent further depletion, and in the case of some species, extinction, an organisation sponsored by the sportsmen of Canada and the United States has been formed to promote a system of artificial incubator hatching on Lake Manitoba.

The incubator is filled with the first setting of eggs "stolen" from the nests, the duck being allowed to hatch her second family herself. The experiment has been so successful that the installation of three large incubators with a capacity of a million ducks a year is contemplated—one in each of the three Prairie Provinces. "Experience has proved," said one of the organisers, "that there is positively no reason for any species of duck becoming extinct. Every species can be produced

artificially in quantity, using the methods we have used on Lake Manitoba. Canvasback, redhead and bluebill are the easiest eggs to hatch, and the birds rear themselves if not disturbed too much."

ARMY HORSES FOR CANADA

Although the British Army is being mechanised, excellent use is being found for the fine pedigree and trained horses which will be displaced, and which are among the finest in the world. An officer from the Canadian Hussars of Montreal, for example, is coming across to select re-mounts which will provide his regiment with a troop of fully-trained horses. After selection, the horses for Canada will be shipped from the re-mount depot at Melton Mowbray and should arrive in Montreal for stabling some time next month. The purchases are being made through the generosity of a number of prominent horse lovers in Canada and public-spirited citizens. The unit has so far been handicapped in its efforts to achieve a superlative standard by the lack of trained horses and of facilities for all-the-year-round mounted training.

FITTER SOUTH AFRICAN NATION

The first step towards putting into practice the Union Government's scheme for national physical training was taken at the end of last month, when an important conference was held in Pretoria to discuss the whole question. The conference, was called by the Department of Defence and was attended by General A. J. E. Brink, Commander-in-Chief of the Burgher Commandos of South Africa, and representatives of the Union and Provincial educational departments. The conference discussed the introduction of some form of general physical training in the schools as a step in the direction of a more ramified scheme for the whole nation.

As far as the Defence Department impinges on schools through the operation of the cadet system, this scheme of general physical training will at first probably be confined to boys who are undergoing cadet training, but it is hoped that the bigger scheme will be put into operation throughout the country before the end of the year. A committee consisting of General Brink, Sir Edward Thornton (Secretary for Public Health) and Professor M. C. Botha (Secretary for Education) has been busy considering the form the scheme should take, but, in the meantime, it is understood the Defence Department has made a beginning with the school-going youth throughout the country. There are, it is stated, approximately 99,000 cadets between the ages of 12 and 16 available for this training two or three times a week. If, in addition, the youths liable for training under the Defence Act were taken into account, a very large proportion of the young men of South Africa will be given some form of physical training under the scheme.

FIRST NATIVE ELECTION

South Africa's first purely native election took place last month and was characterised, the *Cape Times* states, by the greatest enthusiasm and good humour. The election was in the Cape Western,

Cape Eastern and the Transkei Divisions of the Cape Province for the selection of three representatives to Parliament. The voters took their job very seriously and seemed to have made up their minds as to whom to vote for, because rarely was any hesitation displayed in deciding where to put the cross. The average voter went about his business with a seriousness and determination that showed that the election campaigns have been closely followed, and with a sound comprehension of the different policies and standpoints of the candidates. Mr. H. Sloane, Electoral Officer, told a representative of the *Cape Times* that those who had prophesied that the natives would be apathetic towards the election had been more than effectively answered by the day's poll. "While the voters' roll is two years old and it is a difficult matter to trace many natives," said Mr. Sloane, "the enthusiasm and keenness shown to-day has been amazing, and I should not be surprised if the total number of those who have voted is very nearly 50 per cent. of the electorate. We are placing as little restraint on the natives as possible, for, after all, they rightly regard this as their day, and they are making the most of it."

A REPUBLICAN RELIC

A coat-of-arms of the old Transvaal Republic, which had been taken back by the manufacturers when the Republic failed to pay for it, was recently offered to the Transvaal Provincial Council. The coat-of-arms was made for the late South African Republic by the Norwegian African Timber Company in 1899. A certain Mr. Heilmann, who was

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a burgher of the late Republic, visited the factory of the company and saw the coat-of-arms in the manager's office. He then purchased the coat-of-arms from the company, and it has been in the family ever since. The coat-of-arms was offered to the province for £350. The Provincial Council committee, after having inspected the coat-of-arms, stated that they were convinced of its historical association, and that it was a proper object to be exhibited in the Council Chamber.

However, the Transvaal Provincial Council subsequently decided not to purchase the coat-of-arms. The decision followed on a statement by the Administrator, Mr. S. P. Bekker. "This coat-of-arms," said Mr. Bekker, "was offered to the Union Government at £650 in 1932. The Government spent a year investigating the matter and inquiring into the origin of the coat-of-arms, and then discovered that it had never adorned the old Raadsaal of the Republic. The Government further came to the conclusion that the coat-of-arms had no historical value. The owner had later reduced his price to £250, but the Government refused to buy it."

Mrs. C. C. E. Badenhorst, one of the members of the committee which had recommended the purchase of the coat-of-arms, explained that the committee had not been aware of its history and had not known that it had been offered to the Union for £250.

THE TWO RHODESIAS

Mr. Huggins, the Southern Rhodesia Prime Minister, who left London at the end of last week, referred in two of his recent speeches in this country to the demand for uniting the two Rhodesias. It may be recalled that representatives of both the two Colonial Legislatures met at the Victoria Falls in January last year and passed resolutions strongly in favour of amalgamation, and that in May, 1936, the Southern Rhodesian Parliament passed a motion in favour of amalgamation "with full self-government" by 20 votes to 4.

In one of his speeches in London Mr. Huggins said with significant emphasis that unless the people of the Rhodesias were united soon, they would draw apart and unification would become impossible. Commenting on this remark of Mr. Huggins, the *Cape Times* observes that "there is more truth in this apothegm than Downing Street may care to admit. In 1931, opinion in favour of amalgamation in Southern Rhodesia was by no means so strong as it has become since, mainly because Northern Rhodesia seemed to many Southern Rhodesians more a liability than an asset. Copper prosperity in the north has changed that; and the establishment of a single State now seems to be manifestly in the best interest of British influence in Africa. Why, this being so, should the Dominions office reject so decisively the resolution of the Southern Rhodesian Parliament for amalgamation?" The only explanation the paper can find is that the Dominions Department in Whitehall is too much inclined to be influenced by an element in the House of Commons "far more garrulous and bigoted than strong in numbers, which believes that the natives of Northern

Rhodesia would have a less fair deal under a Parliament of the two Rhodesias than at present under Downing Street administration."

BENGAL CABINET'S PLANS

Bengal is to have a handsome Budget surplus this year, according to its Finance Minister, Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, and this pleasing prospect is all the more gratifying when considered in relation to the lean years under the Meston Settlement and the great depression. Mr. Sarkar, while predicting the surplus, took occasion to stress the fact that, in the Governor's relations with his Ministers, there was no interference in any way with their administration of their Departments. They were free to take weighty decisions in matters committed to their charge, subject only to the obvious necessity of maintaining the confidence of their colleagues in the Ministry. Sir John Anderson, he said, never thrust his suggestions on his Ministers but was always ready to give advice whenever it was sought.

The Bengal Cabinet has been busy preparing its programme, which is to be announced this month. Among the measures that will be placed before the Provincial Legislature will be one effecting considerable changes in the Tenancy Law and a five-year plan for the development of industries. The principle underlying this five-year industrial scheme is the effective tackling and harmonious development of the factors of production and distribution relating to the different types of industries of the Province. The plan embraces in its scope large, small and cottage industries. The big industries are to be encouraged by a system of subsidy, while the development of cottage and small industries will be the direct responsibility of the Department of Industries. The plan also contemplates the establishment of an Industrial Intelligence Department, the duty of which, it is understood, will be to collect and keep up-to-date information about the present position of the different industries, big, small or cottage, as also statistics concerning internal trade.

PROVINCIAL TAXATION

Finance Ministers of various provinces have recently been in conference in Bombay, and, though no resolutions were passed, the Conference is said to have arrived at certain definite conclusions. Firstly, the Ministers decided after discussion that no Ministerial programme should be financed by borrowing. Secondly, the Conference came to the conclusion that, although the provincial taxable list under Schedule VII of the Government of India Act appeared to be an imposing one, the provinces could not touch a good many of them without infringing the rights of the municipalities and local boards and thereby committing the same mistake which they were complaining against the Central Government. Thirdly, the Ministers found that after the elimination of these heads there were only about 10 to 12 heads of taxation open to provincial Ministers under which they could expect to obtain a substantial amount to implement their programme. Fourthly, it was discovered that conditions in the provinces differed widely and, therefore, there

could not be uniformity of sources of additional taxation, and even if the same taxes were imposed in all the provinces the result would be varying.

The dozen heads of taxation capable of being utilised by the provincial Finance Ministers, it was recognised, opened out a fairly hopeful vista of taxable resources, and should suffice to enable Ministers to implement their programmes.

CEYLON BROADCASTING

A new broadcasting studio and a powerful transmitter have recently been installed in Ceylon. Mr. J. B. Clark, Director of the Empire Service of the B.B.C., speaking at the studio opening ceremony, said: "One hesitates in the present day to claim a record for anything or anyone, but I think I am right in saying that Ceylon was the first Colony to start organised broadcasting, and the Empire Broadcast Services have had tremendous help from Ceylon, and naturally I wish particularly to mention the Radio Club of Ceylon. The regular reports we have from the Radio Club have been more consistent and more helpful than any other reports we have from any other part of the Empire."

BURMA'S FORESTS

Burma is the proud possessor of the most valuable forest property in the world and its Forest Department now has over 31,600 square miles of reserved forests, principally teak, but containing other valuable timber, in addition to about 123,000 square miles of unclassified forests. This is exclusive of the forest areas in the Federated Shan States. In 1935-36 the annual trade yield of forests

averaged one million tons of timber with a gross revenue of £1,000,000 and a surplus of £600,000. About half the yield was teak, while there was a further one million tons of firewood and charcoal, in addition to minor produce, inclusive of bamboos, canes and grass yielding an annual revenue of about £80,000.

Burma exports to India and other parts of the world over 200,000 tons of mostly converted timber valued at £2,000,000, comprising more than 70 per cent. of the world's export trade in timber of all kinds. The forests also give employment to a very large number of persons, and the department is liberal to the rural population for their requirements. The majority of the forests in Burma are leased to British timber firms of repute, who have been engaged now for many years in the work of felling and extracting the timber from the forests and converting it for trading purposes. There are few indigenous agencies, as they have not the capital, experience and connections with the markets of the world to work on a large scale. Five big British firms have the monopoly of the forest leases.

Teak has, to-day, a world-wide reputation and is being increasingly used in a variety of ways. In certain important uses it is not only unsurpassed but unrivalled, and it is impervious to weather conditions, being equally stable under extremes of heat, cold, damp and drought, while architects praise its "steadiness" of low co-efficient of expansion and contraction and its minimum tendency to warp. Combined with its strength, durability and remarkable powers of resistance to fire, it is an ideal timber for a large variety of important building purposes.

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Letters to the Editor

EMPIRE MIGRATION

Sir,—I was glad to see your article on the apparent shelving of the important question of Empire migration.

Surely neither the Home Government nor the Dominion Governments can afford to neglect this vital problem of filling the many empty spaces of the Empire? None of the Dominions has sufficient population either to guarantee its own defence or to ensure its future progress. The lack of man power is bound to have a crippling effect on Dominion prosperity and security in the not distant future—especially in those Dominions such as New Zealand, where the population has already ceased to increase and will probably seriously decrease in the years to come if no resort is had to immigration.

The outlook altogether is more than bleak for the Dominions if their statesmen do not without much further delay set about arranging for a steady stream of immigrants to their respective countries. The "Depression" has surely been long enough a bogey; is it any longer a valid excuse for letting things slide?

If Whitehall is too slack or too pre-occupied to pay to this matter the attention it deserves, it is up to Dominion statesmen to provide the necessary stimulus. After all, the problem mainly concerns

them; it is they who will suffer most if nothing is done to increase their inadequate populations.

FREDERICK CHARLES A. ADAMSON.
Whitehaven, Cumberland.

BY-ELECTIONS' MORAL

Sir,—May I endorse the comments of your Ilford correspondent on the results of the many by-elections? He has hit the right nail on the head when he says the electorate can hardly wish to put into power a Party which appears to have a superfluity of "leaders" and policies but nothing in the way of either real leadership or attractive programme to offer the country.

In the circumstances one feels that Mr. Neville Chamberlain has every justification for boasting that "if we were to go to the country again to-morrow we should be returned with a majority not less remarkable than that which was given us in 1935."

The National Government certainly has its share of "bone-heads" and "sentimentalists" in office, but at least it does manage every now and then to exhibit sound commonsense in its dealings with the affairs of the country. What the Socialists would do with the country, if they once got into office, one shudders to contemplate: it would be a case of trying vainly to "co-ordinate" a number of hopelessly inconsistent policies, one and all designed to extract moonbeams out of cucumbers.

ARTHUR J. CUTHBERTS.

Birmingham.

OUR DECLINE IN SPORT

Sir,—What has come over our sportsmen? We have this year suffered defeat in almost every field of sport.

True, in cricket, the first test match against New Zealand ended in a draw. But the result was more one on which to congratulate the New Zealand side than our own. It showed up, rather ominously, our weakness in bowling.

Apart, however, from cricket, what satisfaction can one derive from the performance of our golfers in the Ryder Cup matches, from the results of Wimbledon (if we except Miss Round's brilliant play in the Women's Championship) or the devastating eclipse of our oarsmen at Henley?

As regards the last, *The Times'* rowing correspondent's comment is worth quoting. "This year," he said, "the standard of English club rowing was deplorably low in every event." It was because of this that the Grand, the Thames and the Diamonds trophies all went to the foreigner.

What is the cause of this seemingly general decline in sport? One cannot, of course, expect that every year our sportsmen shall shine in every department of sport. But when it comes to a depressing record of failure everywhere, one has perhaps some excuse for wondering whether the fault does not lie with our present systems or lack of system of training our best athletes. Are we, again, sufficiently "organised" for success in sport?

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MACMILLAN

Your Investments

THE FRANC AND MARKETS

THE investing public may be somewhat puzzled to note the stagnation of business on the Stock Exchange at a time when home conditions promise to continue favourable for some time and when international news, though disturbing, is apparently no worse than it has been on several occasions in the past year or so. But until recently there has never been the combination of circumstances to produce such complete curtailment of speculative activity as was brought about by the gold scare, the original N.D.C. proposals, and the Spanish trouble, coinciding with such unfortunate effect.

As an addition to the troubles which markets had to bear came the financial collapse in France, resulting in a fresh devaluation of the franc and, in effect, a suspension, if not worse, of the tripartite monetary agreement between this country, France, and U.S.A. It has on numerous occasions been argued in these columns that Britain and America could lay down the basis of international currency stability and the restoration of international trade by the stabilisation of the sterling-dollar exchange, and the events in France seem to bear out the necessity for putting such proposals into practice. Obviously, it will be many months, and perhaps years, before France is in a position effectively to co-operate with a view to international currency stabilisation. There seems no reason why this country and America should not combine to give a lead which might at least be followed by an extension of financial facilities to the primary producing countries to enable them once again to take their place as importers of manufactured goods to the advantage of those countries which are now living, as we are, by internal activity alone, a form of business aptly described as "taking in each other's washing."

FUTURE OF GILT-EDGED

Apart from the general dullness and stagnation of markets, the most disturbing feature has been the gradual decline in gilt-edged stocks, apart from those offering security of capital through comparatively short redemption dates. Thus the Conversion $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. loan, which is expected to be redeemed in 1940 and is repayable in any event by 1944, gives a net yield, allowing for tax, of under 2 per cent. or a gross return of £2 11s. 6d. per cent., while the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Consols, an "irredeemable" stock, pay £3 7s. per cent. and the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. War Loan, generally classed as "irredeemable," gives over $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The yield on War Loan and on $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Conversion stock is practically £3 11s. per cent., and it is significant that even at these levels these stocks fail to attract the big buyers, who evidently prefer complete security of capital or a more attractive income in the semi-speculative fields. Despite the fact that British Government stocks give better yields than for some time past, the outlook does not justify their immediate purchase save by those getting out of other fixed interest securities.

COMMODITY SHARES

If one can only for a moment overlook the international situation, and the Stock Exchange finds this impossible, the fundamentals of the investment position remain unchanged and there is every prospect of higher commodity and security prices. Those stocks whose movement is directly dependent upon the course of commodity prices, therefore, seem to have quite a bright future, and in this class Tin and Rubber shares are the most promising. Despite the maintenance of the Tin quota at 110 per cent. of the Standard, the decline in visible supplies of the metal continues, and with any settlement of the labour troubles in U.S.A. consumption will proceed further on its upward course. The price of the metal at around £257 is well below the level of over £300 touched earlier in the year and is likely to respond to any improvement in general conditions. Meanwhile the efficient tin-mining companies are making large profits with Tin at its present price and with the present permitted export rate. Pahang Consolidated paid 40 per cent. last year and is likely to increase its dividend rate this year. The company is in a prosperous condition financially and its 5s. shares at under 26s., yielding nearly 8 per cent., appear to offer considerable scope. Siamese Tin Syndicate is another share well worth watching in view of the results recently published. Malayan, at 41s. 3d., are also a good proposition, and London Tin Corporation, at 4s. 3d., offer considerable speculative attractions.

RUBBER SHARES

The price of Rubber has also sagged under the influence of generally depressing conditions which have given buyers, particularly in America, the price of holding off the market. Here again the decline in stocks is continuing steadily, and it appears impossible that the full permitted shipments of Rubber from the chief producing countries can be forthcoming this year. The commodity would quickly respond to any improvement in trading conditions which would result from better international news and from better labour conditions in the States. The price is now under 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb., which compares with about 1s. 1d. reached earlier this year, but, even so, the companies are making quite satisfactory profits and the shares appear to offer considerable scope for income and capital appreciation. Allied Sumatra at 24s., Anglo-Dutch at 38s. 3d., and United Serdang at 4s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. appear to be very reasonably priced, and Rubber Trust at 37s. 9d. have come back 10s. in the past few months, a movement due entirely to the shaking out of speculative holders.

ZINC CORPORATION

The prosperous conditions under which the base metal producers have been working is exemplified by the report of the Zinc Corporation for the year 1936, when net profit rose to £319,436, as against £277,593 in 1935. Since the close of the year there has been further improvement in prices, both for lead and spelter, and the current year should prove still more profitable despite the rise in costs. The shares at £5 return 6 per cent.

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